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Considerations on the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction

Suggested elements for the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction

Note by the secretariat*

Background

The General Assembly, in its resolution 66/199 of 22 December 2011, requested the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) to facilitate the development of a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. The Assembly, in its resolution 67/209 of 21 December 2012, requested UNISDR to serve as the secretariat of the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction and coordinate the preparatory activities in consultation with all stakeholders. By resolution 68/211 of 20 December 2013, the Assembly decided that the Third World Conference would result in a concise, focused, forward-looking and action oriented outcome document.

The present document outlines suggested elements for the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction, drawn from the compilation report on the consultations on the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction (A/CONF.224/PC(I)/5). It aims to support the intergovernmental negotiations of the preparatory process for the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction.

* This document was submitted late due to the need for internal consultations.

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Preamble

1. The 1989 International Framework of Action for the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, the 1994 Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World, and the 1999 International Strategy for Disaster Reduction form the foundation for the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.

2. The adoption and implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters has marked a milestone in catalyzing national and local efforts to reduce disaster risk and in strengthening international cooperation through the development of regional strategies, plans and policies, and the creation of global and regional platforms for disaster risk reduction, as well as the adoption by the United Nations system of the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience.

3. Biennial self-assessments by countries using the Hyogo Framework for Action Monitor have proved to be an important instrument to support implementation and learning. They show that there has been gradual progress in all regions, across all the Priorities for Action of the Hyogo Framework for Action, in particular in strengthening countries' institutional, legislative and policy frameworks, early warning, disaster preparedness for response as well as in risk assessment, education, research, and in fostering public awareness and a common understanding of disaster risk. In addition to civil society and science organizations, local government officials, parliamentarians and business have been increasingly active in contributing to the core mission of the Hyogo Framework for Action. Together with progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, this has contributed to a decrease in mortality risk, particularly in the case of floods, droughts and tropical storms.

4. Countries report less progress in Priority for Action 4 on reducing the underlying risk factors and tackling the causes of risk creation. In addition, while many countries report a substantial increase in their public investments to manage disaster risk, the level continues to be low compared to the vision proposed by the Hyogo Framework for Action.

5. Disaster risk is a combined result of hazard, exposure, and vulnerability. Countries have ways to influence the construction of hazards, exposure and vulnerabilities over time, the risks faced, and social and economic resilience, i.e. the capacity to absorb and recover from losses.

6. Underlying risk drivers, such as unequal economic development, poorly planned and managed urban and regional development, the decline of regulatory ecosystem services, poverty and inequality, weak governance and local capacities and climate change compound disaster risk and hence the levels of disaster loss experienced. At the same time they also condition the resilience of households, communities, businesses and the public sector and thus influence whether disaster loss cascades into a wider range of short and long run social, political and economic impacts. While disaster risk is a problem faced by all countries, risk tends to be higher and resilience lower in developing countries.

7. Existing information indicates that exposure of people and assets in both higher- and lower-income countries has increased faster than vulnerability has decreased, thus generating new risk and a steady increase in socio-economic losses. At the same time, the ongoing creation of new risk, coupled with the existing risk, requires continued efforts to reduce vulnerability. Many governments are now faced with increasing levels of contingent liability and sovereign risk. In particular this poses challenges to countries with small and vulnerable economies and constrained fiscal spaces, such as small island developing States and least developed countries and landlocked developing countries.

8. This vicious cycle, which constitutes a challenge to the safety, security, wellbeing and aspiration of people, communities and countries, can be reversed with a combined

approach aimed at preventing future risk creation, reducing existing levels of risk and strengthening social and economic resilience, targeting both the public and private sectors. Recovery and reconstruction provide critical lessons and opportunities to do so. Public awareness and education are critical to an enabling environment.

9. The integration of cost and benefit of such an approach would contribute to the soundness of economic valuations, competitiveness strategies and investment decisions, including in debt ratings, risk analysis and growth forecasts. Risk-informed public and private investment in key sectors, including health, education, transport, agriculture, tourism, urban development and others are needed, as is the integration of the institutional, legislative and policy frameworks and implementation mechanisms, capacities and tools to address climate and disaster risk.

10. The Hyogo Framework for Action has provided clear guidance on the priority actions needed to address exposure and vulnerability across sectors. Its expected outcome is still valid. The work needs to continue with persistence and perseverance. However, in order to maximise ongoing efforts, a stronger and more specific focus through additional goals is necessary in order to avoid duplications and gaps. More emphasis is required on measures, including public policies, to ensure local action, coherence across institutional boundaries, sectoral policies, financial instruments and all stakeholders' roles, responsibilities and actions, as well as to strengthen accountability, and assess and monitor the impact of activities at local, national and global levels.

11. Against this background, it is proposed to build on and strengthen the Hyogo Framework for Action and previous international frameworks and strategies to guide international and national effort over the next 20 years.

A. Purpose and Outcome

12. The purpose of the Framework is to manage disaster and climate risk in development at local, national and international levels for resilient people and countries.

13. The expected Hyogo Framework for Action outcome of a "substantial reduction of disaster losses, in lives, and in the social, economic and environmental assets, of communities and countries," remains valid.

B. Scope

14. In line with the Hyogo Framework for Action and the Yokohama Strategy, risk associated with geological, climate, weather, environmental and technological hazards fall within the scope of this framework for action. The primary responsibility to holistically manage risk rests with countries.

C. The Plan of Action

15 The effective management of disaster risk requires a Plan of Action by countries with three mutually-supportive goals:

(a) Prevent the creation of new risk by the adoption of risk-informed growth and development pathways that minimise increase in exposure and vulnerability;

(b) Reduce existing risk through the action that addresses and reduces exposure and vulnerability, including preparedness for disaster response;

(c) Strengthen resilience by social and economic measures that enable countries and people to absorb loss, minimise impact and recover.

16. These three goals complement those of the Hyogo Framework for Action and will be implemented in light of the following guiding principles and measures in sections D and E.

D. Guiding Principles

17. The principles contained in the Yokohama Strategy and the Hyogo Framework for Action retain their full relevance and are complemented by the following guiding principles in order to ensure the coherent implementation of the Plan of Action:

(a) The prevention of new risk creation and reduction of existing risk are essential components of governance;

(b) The sustainability of development depends on its ability to prevent new risk creation and the reduction of existing risk;

(c) Sound prevention and reduction of disaster risk are based on risk-informed decision-making, which requires freely available, publicly accessible science-based risk information, including on disaster losses and socio-economic impact, hazards, exposure and vulnerability;

(d) Preventing new risk creation and reducing existing risk require an all-of-society engagement and empowerment, effective equality, inclusion and non-discriminatory participation and assumption of responsibility by all stakeholders;

(e) While the causes and consequences of risk may be national, transboundary or global in scope, disaster risks have local and specific characteristics and their management requires the full engagement and empowerment of local communities, leaders, and administrators and the respect of local and indigenous knowledge;

(f) Preventing new, and reducing the existing, risk of disasters constitute an international legal duty aimed at protecting persons, their livelihoods and property while respecting their human rights;

(g) Aligned and clear responsibilities and action across private stakeholders and all public institutions, including the executive and legislative branches, at local and central level are indispensable for effective disaster risk management and to coherently monitor and review progress;

(h) In the planning and implementation of disaster risk management, the differential capacities of countries and communities need to be duly considered.

E. Implementation

18. The following measures for implementation are suggested:

(a) Systematically record and account for all disaster loss and impact, periodically estimate the probability of disaster risks to the population and to economic and fiscal assets in the context of a changing and variable climate, and convene national multi-stakeholder risk platforms and outlook fora to this aim;

(b) Ensure that national and local plans prevent the creation of new risk, reduce existing risk and strengthen resilience with clear targets and timeframes, and that indicators and mechanisms to monitor, periodically assess and report on progress are put in place. The

formulation and implementation of such plans require the full engagement of all legislative and executive institutions, private stakeholders and clear oversight authority;

(c) Ensure the coherence of, and further develop as appropriate, national frameworks of public policies that, through defining roles and responsibilities:

(i) Guide the public sector in addressing disaster risk in publically owned, managed or regulated services and infrastructure, and in the environment;

(ii) Regulate and provide incentives for actions by households, communities, businesses and individuals, particularly at the local level.

(d) Specific public policies are needed to address post-disaster recovery, reconstruction and displacement, as well as disaster risk in informal urban development and in disaster prone rural areas, such as drylands and drought-prone regions;

(e) Review existing financial and fiscal instruments, including for development cooperation, in order to support risk-sensitive public and private investments;

(f) Stimulate the development, together with the private sector and professional associations, of disaster risk management quality standards and mechanisms for compliance, including certification, in specific sectors, and the use of existing relevant standards, such as International Health Regulations;

(g) Encourage the integration of voluntary commitments from all stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector into national and local plans for disaster risk management.

F. Public awareness and education

19. Public awareness, education at all levels, and professional education and training on the inter-dependence of disasters with development, climate change and variability, disaster risk vulnerability, and exposure are the foundations of a culture of prevention and the implementation of this framework.

20. Specific measures are required to:

(a) Guide educational institutions to integrate disaster risk management into school, university and professional development curricula, and into informal education programmes;

(b) Strengthen public awareness on disaster risk at national and local levels in close collaboration with media, professional associations and civil society;

(c) Further promote the improvement of early warning systems and availability of climate information to ensure that people and communities know how to act on the basis of the warnings;

(d) Stimulate public and institutional debate and scrutiny, including by parliamentarians and other elected officials, on the prevention and reduction of disaster risk based, *inter alia*, on progress reports of local, national and international plans.

G. International Cooperation, Monitoring, Reporting and Review

21. Monitoring is essential to assess progress and adopt the necessary corrective measures. The current Hyogo Framework for Action Monitor will need to be enhanced in order to more effectively measure progress.

22. Global targets and outcome indicators are proposed for the implementation of this framework and measurement of progress. Moreover, families of output indicators are proposed with a view to support countries in the development and monitoring of their national and local plans (see annex).

23. It is proposed that progress on the Plan of Action will be periodically reviewed through the High Level Political Forum in order to assess and adjust implementation in the context of the review of progress on post-2015 sustainable development commitments.

24. Voluntary peer reviews between groups of countries may represent a very useful mechanism to support national reviews of progress, mutual learning, exchange of best practices and cooperation.

25. The Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and the regional platforms and *fora* for disaster risk reduction will remain as important multi-stakeholder mechanisms to forge partnerships, periodically assess progress on implementation and share practice and knowledge on risk-informed policies, programmes and investments, including on development and climate issues. National platforms will play a critical role in fostering the development and monitoring of national and local plans.

26. The Scientific and Technical Committee, established by the General Assembly in its resolution 44/236 of 22 December 1989, will be revitalized and transformed into an international science advisory mechanism to strengthen the evidence base in support of the implementation and monitoring of this framework; promote scientific research into risk patterns and trends and the causes and effects of disaster risk in society; to promote and support the availability and application of science to decision-making; and to use post-disaster reviews as opportunities to learn and enhance public policy.

27. Intergovernmental organizations of global and regional nature, including international financial institutions and the United Nations system, through its United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience, and the Red Cross and the Red Crescent Movement are called upon to support countries and other stakeholders in the implementation of this framework, including the development of relevant sector policies and standards, monitoring mechanisms and the strengthening of capacities.

28. International cooperation needs to give priority to strengthen the capacities to manage risks in developing countries, in particular in least developed countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, through relevant means.

29. The secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction in particular is requested to support the implementation of this framework through: enhancing the Hyogo Framework for Action Monitor and preparing periodic reports on progress in the implementation; generating evidence-based guidance; supporting countries, including through the national platforms or their equivalent, in monitoring trends and patterns in disaster risk, disaster loss and impacts; further strengthening and convening the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction and supporting the organization of regional platforms and *fora* for disaster risk reduction; reinforcing a culture of prevention through advocacy initiatives and dissemination of risk information, policies and practices; coordinating the revision of the 2009 Terminology on Disaster Risk Reduction; facilitating the revitalization and transformation of, and providing support to, the Scientific and Technical Committee; and leading the revision of the United Nations Plan of Action on Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience.

H. Transition phase

30. The activities initiated under the Hyogo Framework for Action Strategic Priorities will continue, in order to maintain the positive momentum and because significant systemic change and impact will require the persistence and perseverance of all stakeholders over the next 20 years.

31. In order to capture significant progress, the reporting cycle against the Hyogo Framework for Action Monitor is proposed to change from two to four years, the next cycle being 2015-2018. The existing system of indicators will be expanded to facilitate measurement of progress of the expected outcome and goals, and tailoring, at national level.

32. Existing regional strategies, plans and programmes may be adjusted, taking into account this new framework.

Annex

PART A

Global targets and indicators

Three **Global Targets** are proposed for the first ten years:

(a) Reduce disaster mortality by half by 2025 (or by a given percentage in a given period of time);
(b) Reduce disaster economic loss by a given percentage by 2025;
(c) Reduce disaster damage to housing, educational and health facilities by a given percentage by 2025.

Rationale

The **Global Targets** are expressed in terms of levels of reduced disaster loss and impact. Disaster *losses* refer to the human, physical and economic losses associated with different hazards and are an indicator of realized risk. They can result in short- to long-term social and economic *impacts*, depending on the resilience of households, communities, businesses and nations. Reducing disaster loss is a proxy for achieving sustainability and growth. Reducing disaster impacts is a proxy for achieving resilience and inclusiveness.

The **Global Targets** can be used by all countries: for example, the halving of disaster mortality in a small island developing State from an annual average of 20 to 10 would be equivalent to halving mortality in Brazil, the Russian Federation, India, China and South Africa (the BRICS countries) from an annual average of 2,000 to 1,000, even though absolute mortality is of a different order of magnitude.

Outcome Indicators on disaster loss and impact, which can be developed from national and global disaster loss databases, would measure achievement of the **Global Targets**. While not all countries systematically record their disaster losses, the adoption of the **Global Targets** as part of the framework will provide a powerful incentive to do so.

PART B

Indicators to support the formulation and monitoring of national plans

In order to measure achievement of the three Goals of the framework, countries will set nationally appropriate targets, the achievement of which would be monitored through families of **Output Indicators.**

GOALS	SUGGESTED FAMILIES OF INDICATORS
Creation of new risk prevented	The first family would measure to what extent underlying drivers of risk and resilience are effectively addressed or not, particularly through public policies to prevent risk generation. This family would contain six groups of indicators on uneven economic development, poverty and inequality, environmental degradation, badly planned and managed urban development, climate change and weak governance.
Existing risk reduced	The second indicator family would measure the current levels of disaster risk in the country with respect to key economic metrics, such as investment, debt and fiscal capacity. This indicator family would provide an objective basis for assessing the effectiveness of public policies in risk reduction. At the same time, it would also enable governments to assess their risk appetite and optimize their investments in disaster risk management in relation to their fiscal capacities.
Resilience strengthened	The third indicator family would measure resilience. This family would contain three groups of indicators measuring the fiscal resilience of the state, the social resilience of households and communities and business resilience. This indicator family would provide information on the effectiveness of public policies to strengthen resilience and on whether countries, businesses and communities can absorb and recover from disaster losses in a way that minimizes the short and long run negative social and economic impacts.